

TRANSMITTAL LETTER TO THE UNITED STATES  
DESIGNATED/ELECTED OFFICE (DO/EO/US)  
CONCERNING A FILING UNDER 35 U.S.C. 371

112740-170

U.S. APPLICATION NO. (IF KNOWN, SEE 37 CFR

09/ 857926

INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO.  
PCT/DE99/03808INTERNATIONAL FILING DATE  
01 December 1999PRIORITY DATE CLAIMED  
09 December 1998

## TITLE OF INVENTION

METHOD FOR OPERATING INTERFACE MODULES IN AN ATM COMMUNICATIONS DEVICE

## APPLICANT(S) FOR DO/EO/US

Joerg Koeppe et al.

Applicant herewith submits to the United States Designated/Elected Office (DO/EO/US) the following items and other information:

1. ☒ This is a **FIRST** submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371.
2. ☐ This is a **SECOND** or **SUBSEQUENT** submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371.
3. ☐ This is an express request to begin national examination procedures (35 U.S.C. 371(f)) at any time rather than delay examination until the expiration of the applicable time limit set in 35 U.S.C. 371(b) and PCT Articles 22 and 39(1).
4. ☒ A proper Demand for International Preliminary Examination was made by the 19th month from the earliest claimed priority date.
5. ☒ A copy of the International Application as filed (35 U.S.C. 371 (c) (2))
  - a. ☒ is transmitted herewith (required only if not transmitted by the International Bureau).
  - b. ☐ has been transmitted by the International Bureau.
  - c. ☐ is not required, as the application was filed in the United States Receiving Office (RO/US).
- ☒ A translation of the International Application into English (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2)).
- ☒ A copy of the International Search Report (PCT/ISA/210).
- ☒ Amendments to the claims of the International Application under PCT Article 19 (35 U.S.C. 371 (c)(3))
  - a. ☐ are transmitted herewith (required only if not transmitted by the International Bureau).
  - b. ☐ have been transmitted by the International Bureau.
  - c. ☐ have not been made; however, the time limit for making such amendments has NOT expired.
  - d. ☒ have not been made and will not be made.
- ☐ A translation of the amendments to the claims under PCT Article 19 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(3)).
- ☒ An oath or declaration of the inventor(s) (35 U.S.C. 371 (c)(4)).
- ☒ A copy of the International Preliminary Examination Report (PCT/IPEA/409).
- ☐ A translation of the annexes to the International Preliminary Examination Report under PCT Article 36 (35 U.S.C. 371 (c)(5)).

## Items 13 to 20 below concern document(s) or information included:

13. ☒ An Information Disclosure Statement under 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98.
14. ☒ An assignment document for recording. A separate cover sheet in compliance with 37 CFR 3.28 and 3.31 is included.
15. ☒ A **FIRST** preliminary amendment.
16. ☐ A **SECOND** or **SUBSEQUENT** preliminary amendment.
17. ☒ A substitute specification.
18. ☐ A change of power of attorney and/or address letter.
19. ☐ Certificate of Mailing by Express Mail
20. ☒ Other items or information:

Submission of Drawings Figure 1 on one sheet

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11 JUN 2001  
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21. The following fees are submitted:

**BASIC NATIONAL FEE ( 37 CFR 1.492 (a) (1) - (5) ) :**

- ☐ Neither international preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) nor international search fee (37 CFR 1.445(a)(2)) paid to USPTO and International Search Report not prepared by the EPO or JPO ..... \$1,000.00
- ☒ International preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) not paid to USPTO but International Search Report prepared by the EPO or JPO ..... \$860.00
- ☐ International preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) not paid to USPTO but international search fee (37 CFR 1.445(a)(2)) paid to USPTO ..... \$710.00
- ☐ International preliminary examination fee paid to USPTO (37 CFR 1.482) but all claims did not satisfy provisions of PCT Article 33(1)-(4) ..... \$690.00
- ☐ International preliminary examination fee paid to USPTO (37 CFR 1.482) and all claims satisfied provisions of PCT Article 33(1)-(4) ..... \$100.00

**ENTER APPROPRIATE BASIC FEE AMOUNT =****\$860.00**

Surcharge of **\$130.00** for furnishing the oath or declaration later than ☐ 20 ☐ 30 months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 CFR 1.492 (e)).

**\$0.00**

CLAIMS	NUMBER FILED	NUMBER EXTRA	RATE	
Total claims	3 - 20 =	0	x \$18.00	<b>\$0.00</b>
Independent claims	1 - 3 =	0	x \$80.00	<b>\$0.00</b>

Multiple Dependent Claims (check if applicable). ☐**\$0.00****TOTAL OF ABOVE CALCULATIONS =****\$860.00**

Reduction of 1/2 for filing by small entity, if applicable. Verified Small Entity Statement must also be filed (Note 37 CFR 1.9, 1.27, 1.28) (check if applicable). ☐

**\$0.00****SUBTOTAL =****\$860.00**

Processing fee of **\$130.00** for furnishing the English translation later than ☐ 20 ☐ 30 months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 CFR 1.492 (f)).

**\$0.00****TOTAL NATIONAL FEE =****\$860.00**

Fee for recording the enclosed assignment (37 CFR 1.21(h)). The assignment must be accompanied by an appropriate cover sheet (37 CFR 3.28, 3.31) (check if applicable). ☐

**\$0.00****TOTAL FEES ENCLOSED =****\$860.00**

Amount to be:	\$
refunded	
charged	\$

☒ A check in the amount of **\$860.00** to cover the above fees is enclosed.☐ Please charge my Deposit Account No. \_\_\_\_\_ in the amount of \_\_\_\_\_ to cover the above fees.☐ A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.☒ The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. **02-1818** A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

**NOTE:** Where an appropriate time limit under 37 CFR 1.494 or 1.495 has not been met, a petition to revive (37 CFR 1.137(a) or (b)) must be filed and granted to restore the application to pending status.

SEND ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:

William E. Vaughan (Reg. No. 39,056)  
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SIGNATURE

William E. Vaughan

NAME

39, 056

REGISTRATION NUMBER

June 11, 2001

DATE

09/857926

JC03 Rec'd PCT/PTC 11 JUN 2001

BOX PCT  
IN THE UNITED STATES ELECTED/DESIGNATED OFFICE  
OF THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE  
UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY-CHAPTER II

**PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT**

APPLICANTS: Joerg Koepp et al. DOCKET NO: 112740-170  
SERIAL NO: GROUP ART UNIT:  
INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO: PCT/DE99/03808  
INTERNATIONAL FILING DATE: 01 December 1999  
INVENTION: METHOD FOR OPERATING INTERFACE MODULES IN AN  
ATM COMMUNICATIONS DEVICE

Assistant Commissioner for Patents,  
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

Please amend the above-identified International Application before entry into the National stage before the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office under 35 U.S.C. §371 as follows:

**In the Specification:**

Please replace the Specification of the present application, including the Abstract, with the following Substitute Specification:

**SPECIFICATION**

**TITLE**

**METHOD FOR OPERATING INTERFACE MODULES IN AN ATM  
COMMUNICATIONS DEVICE**

**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**

**Field of the Invention**

The present invention relates to a method for operating interface modules, which can be specified as active and/or redundant, in an ATM communications device,

in which the interface modules, which can be specified as active and/or redundant, are connected to a central control unit.

**Description of the Prior Art**

5 In communications devices, in particular communications devices that operate using the asynchronous transfer mode, virtual connections are often established, maintained and terminated via interface modules with the aid of a central control unit. The central control unit is used here, in particular, to transmit control commands to establish and clear virtual connections to the interface modules.

10 In order to ensure disruption-free operation and to enable rectification of errors in an active interface module, redundant interface modules and/or redundant transmission paths are provided. If one interface module or transmission path fails, the communications link, in particular a virtual connection, is rerouted to a redundant interface module and/or transmission link. Depending on the level of fail-safety required for a communications device or transmission link, it is possible to provide  
15 different redundancy structures for the associated interface module. Examples of these are "1+1", "1:1" and "1:N" interface module redundancy, cf. in particular "IEEE Journal on Selected Areas in Communications", VOL. 15, No. 5, June 1997, pages 795 to 806.

20 With a "1+1" redundancy structure, two interface modules are operated in parallel in order for communication signal streams to be transmitted via them redundantly. Of these communication signal streams transmitted redundantly, only one is used for the further processing of the virtual connection.

25 With "1:1" interface module redundancy, only one of two interface modules is used as the active interface module, with a switchover being made to the remaining redundant interface module only if the active interface module fails.

With "1:N" interface module redundancy, one redundant interface module is additionally provided for a number N of interface modules. If an error occurs in one of the N interface modules, a switchover is then made to the redundant interface module instead.

With "1:N" interface module redundancy, a selector arrangement is usually connected between the interface modules and the external transmission lines; the selector can allocate the individual transmission lines to the N interface modules and the redundant interface module. It should be noted however that if a selector arrangement fails, or in the event of the selector arrangement being consequently exchanged, all transmission lines connected thereto and the connections they carry are interrupted.

In current communications systems, the central control unit transmits control commands solely to the active interface module, and the active interface module communicates the control commands to the redundant interface module using a communications channel. The active interface module is notified of the receipt of the respective control commands by the redundant interface module. In addition, the active interface module notifies the central control unit of receipt of the control commands only once the control commands have been acknowledged by the redundant interface module. As a consequence, each control command is processed twice by the active interface module during connection establishment or clearing, resulting in a considerable additional dynamic load on the interface module.

An object of the present invention, therefore, is to reduce the dynamic load of interface modules, which can be specified as active and/or redundant, in an ATM communications device.

### **SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION**

Accordingly, the method of the present invention transmits the control commands, provided for the establishment and clearing of at least one virtual connection approximately simultaneously from the central control unit to the active and the redundant interface module, and the central control unit is not notified by the redundant interface module of receipt of the control commands. The approximately simultaneous transmission of the control commands to the active and redundant interface module dispenses with the need for direct communication between the active and redundant module, and performance is improved as a result of shorter connection establishment and clearing times. Furthermore, the load on the communications

channels provided for the exchange of information between the active and redundant interface module is dynamically relieved, and communication capacities of the communications channel are consequently available for additional applications.

Additional features and advantages of the present invention are described in, and will be apparent from, the following Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments and the Drawings.

### **DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS**

Figure 1 shows a block circuit diagram of an ATM communications device to which the method of the present invention is directed.

### **DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS**

FIG 1 shows an ATM communications device KE which operates using the asynchronous transfer mode and which enables the transmission of ATM cells over virtual connections. The ATM communications device KE has a central switching network ASN which has a central switching arrangement ASN-C (ASN core) and at least one ATM multiplexing device AMX connected to the switching arrangement ASN-C.

Connected to the central switching network ASN, specifically to the central switching arrangement ASN-C, via an ATM multiplexing device AMX is an associated central control unit MP, which is provided inter alia for the establishment of virtual connections. In the present exemplary embodiment, a number of interface modules LIC\_akt, ..., LIC\_red are also connected, for example via bidirectional connections, to the central switching network ASN via an ATM multiplexing device AMX, with the interface modules LIC\_akt, ..., LIC\_red being provided, in each case, for the connection of at least one of a number of peripheral transmission lines AL\_akt, ..., AL\_red. The transmission lines AL\_akt, ..., AL\_red are moreover designed for a bidirectional transmission of ATM cells.

The interface modules LIC\_akt, ..., LIC\_red are connected via an associated communications channel KK to the central control unit MP, and control commands sb are transmitted from the central control unit MP to the interface modules LIC\_akt, ..., LIC\_red via the communications channel KK.

The present exemplary embodiment shows an ATM communications device KE having "1+1" interface module redundancy, in which one active and one redundant interface module LIC\_akt, LIC\_red are operated in parallel; that is, the same connection data are transmitted over the redundant interface module LIC\_red as over the associated active interface module LIC\_akt. FIG 1 shows one active and one redundant interface module by way of example. However, only one of the two ATM cell streams are used for the further processing of the virtual connection. Each interface module LIC\_akt, ..., LIC\_red also has a module-specific control unit PCP which receives control commands sb from the central control unit MP over the communications channel KK.

According to the present invention, the control commands sb provided for the establishment and clearing of a virtual connection are transmitted approximately simultaneously from the central control unit MP to the active and redundant interface module LIC\_akt, LIC\_red over the communications channel KK, and the central control unit MP is not notified by the redundant interface module LIC\_red of receipt of the control commands sb. In contrast, the active interface module LIC\_akt notifies the central control unit MP of receipt of the control command sb over the communications channel KK using an "Acknowledge" message ak.

The approximately simultaneous transmission of the control commands sb to the active and redundant interface module LIC\_akt, LIC\_red ensures that both interface modules LIC\_akt, LIC\_red are driven approximately simultaneously into the same operating state, and it is consequently possible to switch over to the functioning, redundant interface module LIC\_red within a very short period of time if the active interface module LIC\_akt fails.

Application of the method according to the present invention is not restricted to "1+1" interface module redundancy, but can be used with different redundancy concepts employed in ATM communications devices KE. This includes both interface module redundancy and transmission link redundancy.

Indeed, although the present invention has been described with reference to specific embodiments, those of skill in the art will recognize that changes may be

made thereto without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as set forth in the hereafter appended claims.

### **ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

5 A method for operating interface modules in an ATM communications device wherein interface modules which can be specified as active and/or redundant are connected to a central control unit. Control commands provided for this purpose are transmitted approximately simultaneously from the central control unit to the active and the redundant interface module during the establishment and clearing of at least one virtual connection, and the redundant interface module does not  
10 acknowledge receipt of the control commands. The load on the interface module is thus dynamically relieved.

#### **In the Claims:**

On page 7, cancel line 1, and substitute the following left-hand justified head therefor:

#### **We Claim as Our Invention:**

Please cancel claims 1-3, without prejudice, and substitute the following claims therefor:

4. A method for operating interface modules in an ATM communications device, wherein each of the interface modules is specified as one  
20 of active and redundant, and wherein the interface modules are connected to a central control unit, the method comprising the steps of:

providing control commands for establishment and clearing of at least one virtual connection; and

transmitting the control commands approximately simultaneously from the  
25 central control unit to the active and the redundant interface modules;

wherein the central control unit is not notified by the redundant interface modules of respective receipt of the control commands.



5. A method for operating interface modules in an ATM communications device as claimed in claim 4, wherein no additional synchronization of the redundant and active interface modules is performed.

6. A method for operating interface modules in an ATM communications device as claimed in claim 4, wherein the procedures provided for controlling the active and redundant interface modules are processed approximately concurrently.

#### **REMARKS**

The present amendment makes editorial changes and corrects typographical errors in the specification, which includes the Abstract, in order to conform the specification to the requirements of United States Patent Practice. No new matter is added thereby. Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the specification by the present amendment. The attached page is captioned "**Version**

#### **With Markings To Show Changes Made".**

In addition, the present amendment cancels original claims 1-3 in favor of new claims 4-6. Claims 4-6 have been presented solely because the revisions by red-lining and underlining which would have been necessary in claims 1-3 in order to present those claims in accordance with preferred United States Patent Practice would have been too extensive, and thus would have been too burdensome. The present amendment is intended for clarification purposes only and not for substantial reasons related to patentability pursuant to 35 USC §§103, 102, 103 or 112. Indeed, the cancellation of claims 1-3 does not constitute an intent on the part of the Applicants to surrender any of the subject matter of claims 1-3.

Early consideration on the merits is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



(Reg. No. 39.056)

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Attorneys for Applicants

## VERSIONS WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

### In The Specification:

The Specification of the present application, including the Abstract, has been amended as follows:

## SPECIFICATION

### TITLE

- 5     ~~Method for operating interface modules in an ATM communications device~~  
      **METHOD FOR OPERATING INTERFACE MODULES IN AN ATM**  
          **COMMUNICATIONS DEVICE**

### BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

#### Description

- 10    **Field of the Invention**

The present invention relates to a method for operating interface modules, which can be specified as active and/or redundant, in an ATM communications device, in which the interface modules, which can be specified as active and/or redundant, are connected to a central control unit.

- 15    **Description of the Prior Art**

In communications devices, in particular communications devices that operate using the asynchronous transfer mode, virtual connections are often established, maintained and terminated via interface modules with the aid of a central control unit. The central control unit is used here, in particular, to transmit control commands to  
20    establish and clear virtual connections to the interface modules.

- In order to ensure disruption-free operation and to enable rectification of errors in an active interface module, redundant interface modules and/or redundant transmission paths are provided. If one interface module or transmission path fails, the communications link, in particular a virtual connection, is rerouted to a redundant  
25    interface module and/or transmission link. Depending on the level of fail-safety required for a communications device or transmission link, it is possible to provide different redundancy structures for the associated interface module. Examples of these are “1+1”, “1:1” and “1:N” interface module redundancy, cf. in particular “IEEE

Journal on Selected Areas in Communications”, VOL. 15, No. 5, June 1997, pages 795 to 806.

With a “1+1” redundancy structure, two interface modules are operated in parallel in order for communication signal streams to be transmitted via them  
5 redundantly. Of these communication signal streams transmitted redundantly, only one is used for the further processing of the virtual connection.

With “1:1” interface module redundancy, only one of two interface modules is used as the active interface module, with a switchover being made to the remaining redundant interface module only if the active interface module fails.

10 With “1:N” interface module redundancy, one redundant interface module is additionally provided for a ~~plurality number~~ N of interface modules. If an error occurs in one of the N interface modules, a switchover is then made to the redundant interface module instead.

With “1:N” interface module redundancy, a selector arrangement is usually  
15 connected between the interface modules and the external transmission lines; ~~said the~~ selector can allocate the individual transmission lines to the N interface modules and the redundant interface module. It should be noted however that if a selector arrangement fails, or in the event of ~~said the~~ selector arrangement being consequently exchanged, all transmission lines connected thereto and the connections they carry are  
20 interrupted.

In current communications systems, the central control unit transmits control commands solely to the active interface module, and the active interface module communicates the control commands to the redundant interface module using a communications channel. The active interface module is notified of the receipt of the  
25 respective control commands by the redundant interface module. In addition, the active interface module notifies the central control unit of receipt of the control commands only once the control commands have been acknowledged by the redundant interface module. As a consequence, each control command is processed twice by the active interface module during connection establishment or clearing, resulting in a  
30 considerable additional dynamic load on the interface module.

5 ~~The An~~ object of the present invention, therefore, is to reduce the dynamic load of interface modules, which can be specified as active and/or redundant, in an ATM communications device. ~~Starting from a method according to the features set out in the preamble of patent claim 1, this object is achieved by the feature set out in the defining part.~~

### SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

10 ~~The essential aspect of~~ Accordingly, the method ~~according to~~ of the present invention is that transmits the control commands, provided for the establishment and clearing of at least one virtual connection, ~~are transmitted~~ approximately simultaneously from the central control unit to the active and the redundant interface module, and the central control unit is not notified by the redundant interface module of receipt of the control commands. The approximately simultaneous transmission of the control commands to the active and redundant interface module dispenses with the need for direct communication between the active and redundant module, and

15 performance is improved as a result of shorter connection establishment and clearing times. Furthermore, the load on the communications channels provided for the exchange of information between the active and redundant interface module is dynamically relieved, and communication capacities of the communications channel are consequently available for additional applications.

20 Additional features and advantages of the present invention are described in, and will be apparent from, the following Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments and the Drawings.

~~Additional advantageous refinements of the method according to the invention emerge from the further claims.~~

### DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

25 Figure 1 shows a block circuit diagram of an ATM communications device to which the method of the present invention is directed.

### DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

30 ~~The method according to the invention is explained in greater detail below with reference to a block circuit diagram in which only the elements of an ATM~~

communications device KE which are required to understand the present invention are represented.

FIG 1 shows an ATM communications device KE which operates using the asynchronous transfer mode and which enables the transmission of ATM cells over virtual connections. The ATM communications device KE has a central switching network ASN which has a central switching arrangement ASN-C (ASN core) and at least one ATM multiplexing device AMX connected to the switching arrangement ASN-C.

Connected to the central switching network ASN, specifically to the central switching arrangement ASN-C, via an ATM multiplexing device AMX is an associated central control unit MP, which is provided inter alia for the establishment of virtual connections. In the present exemplary embodiment, a plurality number of interface modules LIC\_akt, ..., LIC\_red are also connected, for example by means of via bidirectional connections, to the central switching network ASN via an ATM multiplexing device AMX, with the interface modules LIC\_akt, ..., LIC\_red being provided, in each case, for the connection of at least one of a plurality number of peripheral transmission lines AL\_akt, ..., AL\_red. Said The transmission lines AL\_akt, ..., AL\_red are moreover designed for a bidirectional transmission of ATM cells.

The interface modules LIC\_akt, ..., LIC\_red are connected via an associated communications channel KK to the central control unit MP, and control commands sb are transmitted from the central control unit MP to the interface modules LIC\_akt, ..., LIC\_red by means of via the communications channel KK.

The present exemplary embodiment shows an ATM communications device KE having "1+1" interface module redundancy, in which one active and one redundant interface module LIC\_akt, LIC\_red are operated in parallel; that is, to say the same connection data are transmitted over the redundant interface module LIC\_red as over the associated active interface module LIC\_akt. FIG 1 shows one active and one redundant interface module by way of example. However, only one of the two ATM cell streams are used for the further processing of the virtual connection. Each interface

module LIC\_akt, ..., LIC\_red also has a module-specific control unit PCP which receives control commands sb from the central control unit MP over the communications channel KK.

According to the present invention, the control commands sb provided for the establishment and clearing of a virtual connection are transmitted approximately simultaneously from the central control unit MP to the active and redundant interface module LIC\_akt, LIC\_red over the communications channel KK, and the central control unit MP is not notified by the redundant interface module LIC\_red of receipt of the control commands sb. In contrast, the active interface module LIC\_akt notifies the central control unit MP of receipt of the control command sb over the communications channel KK using an "Acknowledge" message ak.

The approximately simultaneous transmission of the control commands sb to the active and redundant interface module LIC\_akt, LIC\_red ensures that both interface modules LIC\_akt, LIC\_red are driven approximately simultaneously into the same operating state, and it is consequently possible to switch over to the functioning, redundant interface module LIC\_red within a very short ~~space~~ period of time if the active interface module LIC\_akt fails.

Application of the method according to the present invention is not restricted to "1+1" interface module redundancy, but can be used with different redundancy concepts employed in ATM communications devices KE. This includes both interface module redundancy and transmission link redundancy.

Indeed, although the present invention has been described with reference to specific embodiments, those of skill in the art will recognize that changes may be made thereto without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as set forth in the hereafter appended claims.

Abstract

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Method for operating interface modules in an ATM communications device

- 5     A method for operating interface modules in an ATM communications device  
wherein interface ~~Interface~~ modules (~~LIC\_akt, ..., LIC\_red~~) which can be specified as  
active and/or redundant are connected to a central control unit (~~MP~~). Control  
commands (~~sb~~) provided for ~~the~~ this purpose are transmitted approximately  
simultaneously from the central control unit (~~MP~~) to the active and the redundant  
interface module (~~LIC\_akt, ..., LIC\_red~~) during the establishment and clearing of at  
10   least one virtual connection, and the redundant interface module (~~LIC\_red~~) does not  
acknowledge receipt of the control commands (~~sb~~). The load on the interface module  
(~~LIC\_akt~~) is thus dynamically relieved.

Figure 1

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0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100 101 102 103 104 105 106 107 108 109 110 111 112 113 114 115 116 117 118 119 120 121 122 123 124 125 126 127 128 129 130 131 132 133 134 135 136 137 138 139 140 141 142 143 144 145 146 147 148 149 150 151 152 153 154 155 156 157 158 159 160 161 162 163 164 165 166 167 168 169 170 171 172 173 174 175 176 177 178 179 180 181 182 183 184 185 186 187 188 189 190 191 192 193 194 195 196 197 198 199 200 201 202 203 204 205 206 207 208 209 210 211 212 213 214 215 216 217 218 219 220 221 222 223 224 225 226 227 228 229 230 231 232 233 234 235 236 237 238 239 240 241 242 243 244 245 246 247 248 249 250 251 252 253 254 255 256 257 258 259 260 261 262 263 264 265 266 267 268 269 270 271 272 273 274 275 276 277 278 279 280 281 282 283 284 285 286 287 288 289 290 291 292 293 294 295 296 297 298 299 300 301 302 303 304 305 306 307 308 309 310 311 312 313 314 315 316 317 318 319 320 321 322 323 324 325 326 327 328 329 330 331 332 333 334 335 336 337 338 339 340 341 342 343 344 345 346 347 348 349 350 351 352 353 354 355 356 357 358 359 360 361 362 363 364 365 366 367 368 369 370 371 372 373 374 375 376 377 378 379 380 381 382 383 384 385 386 387 388 389 390 391 392 393 394 395 396 397 398 399 400 401 402 403 404 405 406 407 408 409 410 411 412 413 414 415 416 417 418 419 420 421 422 423 424 425 426 427 428 429 430 431 432 433 434 435 436 437 438 439 440 441 442 443 444 445 446 447 448 449 450 451 452 453 454 455 456 457 458 459 460 461 462 463 464 465 466 467 468 469 470 471 472 473 474 475 476 477 478 479 480 481 482 483 484 485 486 487 488 489 490 491 492 493 494 495 496 497 498 499 500 501 502 503 504 505 506 507 508 509 510 511 512 513 514 515 516 517 518 519 520 521 522 523 524 525 526 527 528 529 530 531 532 533 534 535 536 537 538 539 540 541 542 543 544 545 546 547 548 549 550 551 552 553 554 555 556 557 558 559 560 561 562 563 564 565 566 567 568 569 570 571 572 573 574 575 576 577 578 579 580 581 582 583 584 585 586 587 588 589 590 591 592 593 594 595 596 597 598 599 600 601 602 603 604 605 606 607 608 609 610 611 612 613 614 615 616 617 618 619 620 621 622 623 624 625 626 627 628 629 630 631 632 633 634 635 636 637 638 639 640 641 642 643 644 645 646 647 648 649 650 651 652 653 654 655 656 657 658 659 660 661 662 663 664 665 666 667 668 669 670 671 672 673 674 675 676 677 678 679 680 681 682 683 684 685 686 687 688 689 690 691 692 693 694 695 696 697 698 699 700 701 702 703 704 705 706 707 708 709 710 711 712 713 714 715 716 717 718 719 720 721 722 723 724 725 726 727 728 729 730 731 732 733 734 735 736 737 738 739 740 741 742 743 744 745 746 747 748 749 750 751 752 753 754 755 756 757 758 759 760 761 762 763 764 765 766 767 768 769 770 771 772 773 774 775 776 777 778 779 780 781 782 783 784 785 786 787 788 789 790 791 792 793 794 795 796 797 798 799 800 801 802 803 804 805 806 807 808 809 810 811 812 813 814 815 816 817 818 819 820 821 822 823 824 825 826 827 828 829 830 831 832 833 834 835 836 837 838 839 840 841 842 843 844 845 846 847 848 849 850 851 852 853 854 855 856 857 858 859 860 861 862 863 864 865 866 867 868 869 870 871 872 873 874 875 876 877 878 879 880 881 882 883 884 885 886 887 888 889 890 891 892 893 894 895 896 897 898 899 900 901 902 903 904 905 906 907 908 909 910 911 912 913 914 915 916 917 918 919 920 921 922 923 924 925 926 927 928 929 930 931 932 933 934 935 936 937 938 939 940 941 942 943 944 945 946 947 948 949 950 951 952 953 954 955 956 957 958 959 960 961 962 963 964 965 966 967 968 969 970 971 972 973 974 975 976 977 978 979 980 981 982 983 984 985 986 987 988 989 990 991 992 993 994 995 996 997 998 999 1000 1001 1002 1003 1004 1005 1006 1007 1008 1009 1010 1011 1012 1013 1014 1015 1016 1017 1018 1019 1020 1021 1022 1023 1024 1025 1026 1027 1028 1029 1030 1031 1032 1033 1034 1035 1036 1037 1038 1039 1

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With a "1+1" redundancy structure, two interface modules are operated in parallel in order for communication signal streams to be transmitted via them redundantly. Of these communication signal streams  
5 transmitted redundantly, only one is used for the further processing of the virtual connection.

With "1:1" interface module redundancy, only one of two interface modules is used as the active interface module, with a switchover being made to the  
10 remaining redundant interface module only if the active interface module fails.

With "1:N" interface module redundancy, one redundant interface module is additionally provided for a plurality N of interface modules. If an error occurs  
15 in one of the N interface modules, a switchover is then made to the redundant interface module instead.

With "1:N" interface module redundancy, a selector arrangement is usually connected between the interface modules and the external transmission lines;  
20 said selector can allocate the individual transmission lines to the N interface modules and the redundant interface module. It should be noted however that if a selector arrangement fails, or in the event of said selector arrangement being consequently exchanged, all  
25 transmission lines connected thereto and the connections they carry are interrupted.

In current communications systems, the central control unit transmits control commands solely to the active interface module, and the active interface  
30 module communicates the control commands to the redundant interface module using a communications channel. The active interface module is notified of the receipt of the respective control commands by the

redundant interface module. In addition, the active interface module notifies the central control unit of receipt of the control commands only once the control commands have been acknowledged by the redundant interface module. As a consequence, each control command is processed twice by the active interface module during connection establishment or clearing, resulting in a considerable additional dynamic load on the interface module.

The object of the invention is to reduce the dynamic load of interface modules, which can be specified as active and/or redundant, in an ATM communications device. Starting from a method according to the features set out in the preamble of patent claim 1, this object is achieved by the feature set out in the defining part.

The essential aspect of the method according to the invention is that the control commands provided for the establishment and clearing of at least one virtual connection are transmitted approximately simultaneously from the central control unit to the active and the redundant interface module, and the central control unit is not notified by the redundant interface module of receipt of the control commands. The approximately simultaneous transmission of the control commands to the active and redundant interface module dispenses with the need for direct communication between the active and redundant module, and performance is improved as a result of shorter connection establishment and clearing times. Furthermore, the load on the communications channels provided for the exchange of information between the active and redundant interface module is dynamically relieved, and communication capacities of the communications channel are consequently available for additional applications.

Additional advantageous refinements of the method according to the invention emerge from the further claims.

The method according to the invention is explained in greater detail below with reference to a block circuit diagram in which only the elements of an ATM communications device KE which are required to understand the present invention are represented.

FIG 1 shows an ATM communications device KE which operates using the asynchronous transfer mode and which enables the transmission of ATM cells over virtual connections. The ATM communications device KE has a central switching network ASN which has a central switching arrangement ASN-C (ASN core) and at least one ATM multiplexing device AMX connected to the switching arrangement ASN-C.

Connected to the central switching network ASN, specifically to the central switching arrangement ASN-C, via an ATM multiplexing device AMX is an associated central control unit MP, which is provided inter alia for the establishment of virtual connections. In the present exemplary embodiment, a plurality of interface modules LIC\_akt, ..., LIC\_red are also connected, for example by means of bidirectional connections, to the central switching network ASN via an ATM multiplexing device AMX, with the interface modules LIC\_akt, ..., LIC\_red being provided in each case for the connection of at least one of a plurality of peripheral transmission lines AL\_akt, ..., AL\_red. Said transmission lines AL\_akt, ..., AL\_red are moreover designed for a bidirectional transmission of ATM cells.

The interface modules LIC\_akt, ..., LIC\_red are connected via an associated communications channel KK to the central control unit MP, and control commands sb are transmitted from the central control unit MP to the interface modules LIC\_akt, ..., LIC\_red by means of the communications channel KK.

The present exemplary embodiment shows an ATM communications device KE having "1+1" interface module redundancy, in which one active and one redundant interface module LIC\_akt, LIC\_red are operated in parallel, that is to say the same connection data are transmitted over the redundant interface module LIC\_red as over the associated active interface module LIC\_akt. FIG 1 shows one active and one redundant interface module by way of example. However, only one of the two ATM cell streams are used for the further processing of the virtual connection. Each interface module LIC\_akt, ..., LIC\_red also has a module-specific control unit PCP which receives control commands sb from the central control unit MP over the communications channel KK.

According to the invention, the control commands sb provided for the establishment and clearing of a virtual connection are transmitted approximately simultaneously from the central control unit MP to the active and redundant interface module LIC\_akt, LIC\_red over the communications channel KK, and the central control unit MP is not notified by the redundant interface module LIC\_red of receipt of the control commands sb. In contrast, the active interface module LIC\_akt notifies the central control unit MP of receipt of the control command sb over the communications channel KK using an "Acknowledgment" message ak.

The approximately simultaneous transmission of the control commands sb to the active and redundant interface module LIC\_akt, LIC\_red ensures that both interface modules LIC\_akt, LIC\_red are driven approximately simultaneously into the same operating state, and it is consequently possible to switch over to the functioning, redundant interface module LIC\_red within a very short space of time if the active interface module LIC\_akt fails.

Application of the method according to the invention is not restricted to "1+1" interface module redundancy, but can be used with different redundancy concepts employed in ATM communications devices KE.

- 5 This includes both interface module redundancy and transmission link redundancy.

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## Patent claims

1. A method for operating interface modules (LIC\_akt, ..., LIC\_red), which can be specified as active  
5 and/or redundant, in an ATM communications device (KE),  
in which the interface modules (LIC\_akt, ..., LIC\_red),  
which can be specified as active and/or redundant, are  
connected to a central control unit (MP), characterized  
in that the control commands (sb) provided for the  
10 establishment and clearing of at least one virtual  
connection are transmitted approximately simultaneously  
from the central control unit (MP) to the active and  
the redundant interface module (LIC\_akt, ..., LIC\_red),  
and the central control unit (MP) is not notified by  
15 the redundant interface module (LIC\_red) of receipt of  
the control commands (sb).
2. The method as claimed in claim 1, characterized  
in that no additional synchronization of the redundant  
and active interface module (LIC\_akt, ..., LIC\_red) is  
20 performed.
3. The method as claimed in claim 1 or 2,  
characterized in that the procedures provided for  
controlling the active and redundant interface module  
(LIC\_akt, ..., LIC\_red) are processed approximately  
25 concurrently.

## Abstract

Method for operating interface modules in an ATM communications device

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Interface modules (LIC\_akt, ..., LIC\_red) which can be specified as active and/or redundant are connected to a central control unit (MP). Control commands (sb) provided for the purpose are transmitted approximately simultaneously from the central control unit (MP) to the active and the redundant interface module (LIC\_akt, ..., LIC\_red) during the establishment and clearing of at least one virtual connection, and the redundant interface module (LIC\_red) does not acknowledge receipt of the control commands (sb). The load on the interface module (LIC\_akt) is thus dynamically relieved.

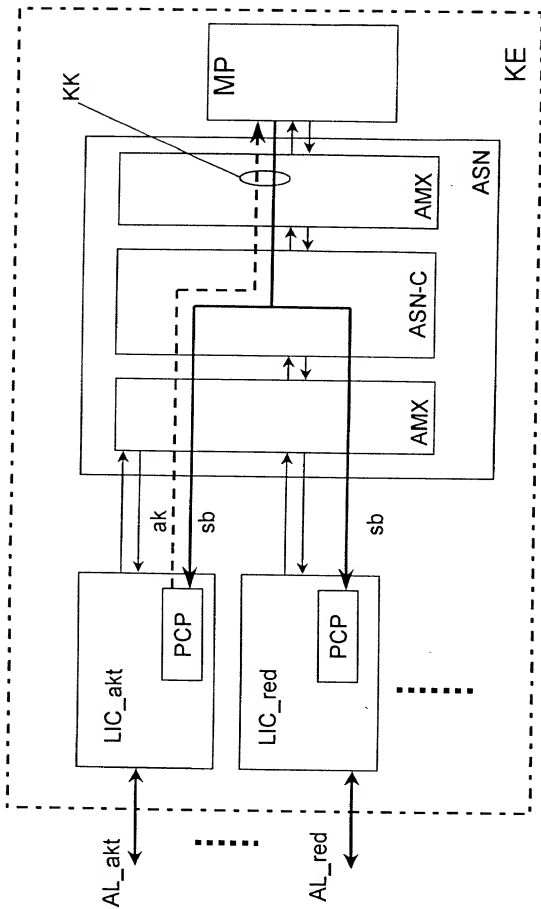
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Figure 1



FIG 1



# Declaration and Power of Attorney For Patent Application

## Erklärung Für Patentanmeldungen Mit Vollmacht

### German Language Declaration

Als nachstehend benannter Erfinder erkläre ich hiermit an Eides Statt:

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

dass mein Wohnsitz, meine Postanschrift, und meine Staatsangehörigkeit den im Nachstehenden nach meinem Namen aufgeführten Angaben entsprechen,

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name,

dass ich, nach bestem Wissen der ursprüngliche, erste und alleinige Erfinder (falls nachstehend nur ein Name angegeben ist) oder ein ursprünglicher, erster und Miterfinder (falls nachstehend mehrere Namen aufgeführt sind) des Gegenstandes bin, für den dieser Antrag gestellt wird und für den ein Patent beantragt wird für die Erfindung mit dem Titel:

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled

Verfahren zum Betreiben von  
Peripheriebaugruppen innerhalb einer  
ATM-Kommunikationseinrichtung

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

deren Beschreibung

the specification of which

(zutreffendes ankreuzen)

(check one)

☒ hier beigefügt ist.

☐ is attached hereto.

☒ am \_\_\_\_\_ als

☐ was filed on \_\_\_\_\_ as

PCT internationale Anmeldung

PCT international application

PCT Anmeldungsnummer \_\_\_\_\_

PCT Application No. \_\_\_\_\_

eingereicht wurde und am \_\_\_\_\_

and was amended on \_\_\_\_\_

abgeändert wurde (falls tatsächlich abgeändert).

(if applicable)

Ich bestätige hiermit, dass ich den Inhalt der obigen Patentanmeldung einschliesslich der Ansprüche durchgesehen und verstanden habe, die eventuell durch einen Zusatzantrag wie oben erwähnt abgeändert wurde.

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above identified specification, including the claims as amended by any amendment referred to above.

Ich erkenne meine Pflicht zur Offenbarung irgendwelcher Informationen, die für die Prüfung der vorliegenden Anmeldung in Einklang mit Absatz 37, Bundesgesetzbuch, Paragraph 1.56(a) von Wichtigkeit sind, an.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to the examination of this application in accordance with Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, §1.56(a).

Ich beanspruche hiermit ausländische Prioritätsvorteile gemäss Abschnitt 35 der Zivilprozessordnung der Vereinigten Staaten, Paragraph 119 aller unten angegebenen Auslandsanmeldungen für ein Patent oder eine Erfindersurkunde, und habe auch alle Auslandsanmeldungen für ein Patent oder eine Erfindersurkunde nachstehend gekennzeichnet, die ein Anmeldedatum haben, das vor dem Anmeldedatum der Anmeldung liegt, für die Priorität beansprucht wird.

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code, §119 of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate listed below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed:

# German Language Declaration

Prior foreign applications  
Priorität beansprucht

Priority Claimed

198 56 835.5 Germany

09. Dezember 1998

(Number) (Country)  
(Nummer) (Land)

(Day Month Year Filed)  
(Tag Monat Jahr eingereicht)

☒ ☐  
Yes No  
Ja Nein

(Number) (Country)  
(Nummer) (Land)

(Day Month Year Filed)  
(Tag Monat Jahr eingereicht)

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Yes No  
Ja Nein

(Number) (Country)  
(Nummer) (Land)

(Day Month Year Filed)  
(Tag Monat Jahr eingereicht)

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Yes No  
Ja Nein

Ich beanspruche hiermit gemäss Absatz 35 der Zivilprozessordnung der Vereinigten Staaten, Paragraph 120, den Vorzug aller unten aufgeführten Anmeldungen und falls der Gegenstand aus jedem Anspruch dieser Anmeldung nicht in einer früheren amerikanischen Patentanmeldung laut dem ersten Paragraphen des Absatzes 35 der Zivilprozessordnung der Vereinigten Staaten, Paragraph 122 offenbart ist, erkenne ich gemäss Absatz 37, Bundesgesetzbuch, Paragraph 1.56(a) meine Pflicht zur Offenbarung von Informationen an, die zwischen dem Anmeldedatum der früheren Anmeldung und dem nationalen oder PCT internationalen Anmeldedatum dieser Anmeldung bekannt geworden sind.

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, §120 of any United States application(s) listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United States Code, §122, I acknowledge the duty to disclose material information as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, §1.56(a) which occurred between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of this application.

(Application Serial No.)  
(Anmeldeseriennummer)

(Filing Date)  
(Anmeldedatum)

(Status)  
(patentiert, anhängig,  
aufgegeben)

(Status)  
(patented, pending,  
abandoned)

(Application Serial No.)  
(Anmeldeseriennummer)

(Filing Date)  
(Anmeldedatum)

(Status)  
(patentiert, anhängig,  
aufgeben)

(Status)  
(patented, pending,  
abandoned)

Ich erkläre hiermit, dass alle von mir in der vorliegenden Erklärung gemachten Angaben nach meinem besten Wissen und Gewissen der vollen Wahrheit entsprechen, und dass ich diese eidesstattliche Erklärung in Kenntnis dessen abgebe, dass wissenschaftlich und vorsätzlich falsche Angaben gemäss Paragraph 1001, Absatz 18 der Zivilprozessordnung der Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika mit Geldstrafe belegt und/oder Gefängnis bestraft werden können, und dass derartig wissenschaftlich und vorsätzlich falsche Angaben die Gültigkeit der vorliegenden Patentanmeldung oder eines darauf erteilten Patentes gefährden können.

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true, and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

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POWER OF ATTORNEY: As a named inventor, I hereby appoint the following attorney(s) and/or agent(s) to prosecute this application and transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith. (list name and registration number)

And I hereby appoint

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Second inventor's signature

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(Bitte entsprechende Informationen und Unterschriften im Falle von dritten und weiteren Miterfindern angeben).

(Supply similar information and signature for third and subsequent joint inventors).